

2025 Northeast Sea Grant Regional Meeting (April 29 – May 1, 2025)
Location: Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, Cape Cod, Massachusetts

AGENDA (Updated: April 25, 2025)

Purpose and Objectives:

- The Regional Meeting will provide opportunities to learn about research, extension, education or communications projects from other states and programs that have relevance for your Sea Grant program and highlight regional efforts.
- The Regional Meeting will provide opportunities to cultivate professional relationships among members of the different Sea Grant Programs.
- The Regional Meeting will provide adequate time for potential collaborators to develop ideas and next steps so that ideas are not lost after everyone returns to their respective states.
- People will come away with new ideas, skills, and connections that can benefit their own work.
- People will come away with new or renewed motivation and enthusiasm.

Major Considerations for Planning Committee in developing the agenda: Sessions should consider the following priorities:

- Be interactive, and participants should not feel like they are being talked at;
- Prioritize frank discussions of successes, failures, and challenges;
- Event should offer both informal and formal opportunities to gather.
- Ensure there are opportunities for all functional areas to present/participate in sessions
- We do NOT have to cover every topic.
- Each Sea Grant program should lead a session.

Day 1 (Tuesday, April 29):

Time	Activity
3:00pm	Check in Clark Room 507 please see map
4:15pm	Welcome - Matt Charette, Director, WHOI Sea Grant - Tracey Dalton, Director, RI Sea Grant
4:30pm	Plenary: Dr. Casey Thornbrugh , Finding the Focus through Turbulent Times to Achieve a Greater Mission to Maintain Healthy Coastal Communities Moderator: Leslie Jonas, WHOI Tribal Liaison, WHOI Sea Grant
5:45pm	Event Overview - Poonam Narotam, WHOI Sea Grant - Monica Allard Cox, RI Sea Grant This includes information about the Offsite Sessions the following day
6:00pm	Welcome Networking Reception - David Center / AVAST (WHOI) – Cash Bar

8:00pm	Social Hours at Aquatic (661 Main St. Falmouth, MA 02540) 8pm - 10pm and/or Falmouth Inn 8pm - close
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Day 2 (Wednesday, April 30):

Time	Activity
7:00am	Breakfast at Falmouth Inn banquet room. Some will pickup boxed lunches for the afternoon.
~9:00 – 4:00	Offsite Session Options: see detailed descriptions below 1. Coastal Processes Walking Tour at Town Neck Beach (9am-4pm) 2. Exploring Science with Woods Hole's Science Institutions (9am-2pm) 3. Engaging with Indigenous Science and Communities (8:15am-4pm) 4. "See Herring Run" Across Cape Cod (9am-4pm) 5. Exploring Tidal Aquaculture at the Brewster Tidal Flats (6am-1:30pm or 4pm)
6:00pm	Banquet dinner and awards in Clark 507 – Cash Bar
8:30pm	Social Hours at Falmouth Inn

Day 3 (Thursday, May 1st):

Time	Activity
8:00am	Breakfast at WHOI Clark 507
9:00am	Welcome and offsite session recall - Erin Chase, WHOI Sea Grant - Jen McCann, RI Sea Grant
9:30am	National Office update via Zoom - Kola Garber and Maddie Kennedy, National Sea Grant Office
10:00am	Regional Projects and other updates - Kayla Walsh
10:40am	Break
11:00am	Functional Area Breakouts: 1) Education; 2) Extension and Legal Room 509 (confirmed); Communications Room 201 (confirmed); 3) Fiscal; 4) Research; 5) Directors
12:00pm	Lunch
1:00pm	Topical Breakouts #1: a. Resilience Planning and Resources Room 509 b. Promoting accurate evidence-based information sharing related to coasts and oceans Room 507

2:15pm	Break
2:30pm	Topical Breakouts #2: a. Participatory Science and Sea Grant Room 509 b. Bolstering the Blue Economy Workforce (K-12, University, and professional) Room 201 c. Improving Accessibility of Sea Grant Learning Opportunities from Digital Media to Field Experiences Room 507
3:45pm	Closing Remarks Matt and Tracey
4:00pm	Adjourn/Depart

DAY 2 OFFSITE SESSION DESCRIPTIONS:

1. Coastal Processes Walking Tour at Town Neck Beach

Leads: Bryan McCormack and Shelly McComb (WHOISG)

Join Shelly and Bryan at Town Neck Beach in Sandwich to hear about some of the work that is going on at this location. The Cape Cod Canal has blocked sediment transport, leading to a whole host of issues. Late last year, the area saw one of the largest nourishment projects ever in Massachusetts with collaboration between local, state, and federal partners, as well as the residents. You will hear from the Town's Director of Natural Resources and long-time resident, Dave DeConto, about coastal management. Shelly will walk you through CoastSnap, a community-based science and outreach initiative. Bryan will bring along an RTK GPS so you can learn about the technology and how it can be used to quickly survey changes on the beach and beyond. After lunch, you'll have time to join in a beach clean up or go explore the salt marsh and canal!

2. Exploring Science with Woods Hole's Science Institutions

Lead: Grace Simpkins (WHOISG)

We will tour WHOI and go "behind the scenes". We'll visit the sediment core repository and discuss how you use this "library" of cores. We'll investigate our David Innovation Center and see some of the sensors and robotics that WHOI is famous for. In the village of Woods Hole, we'll freely explore the WHOI Discovery Center, Woods Hole Science Aquarium, and the WHOI Dock while we discuss how all of these resources are used in our ELWD efforts.

3. Engaging with Indigenous Science and Communities

Leads: Stephanie Murphy and Leslie Jonas (WHOISG)

In the morning, we will take a guided walk along the winding trails of the Mashpee River Woodlands, with breath-taking views of the Mashpee River. Mashpee Wampanoag and Nipmuc tribal member Marcus Hendricks will describe the history of the river and its connection to the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe. We'll discover the low-lying wintergreen and the tasty teaberry along the way. The walk will be preceded or followed by a docent-led visit to the Wampanoag Indian Museum. The group will then head to Waquoit Bay for lunch and a

talk led by Mashpee Wampanoag culture keeper, Darius Coombs, describing Wampanoag culture and traditional methods for drilling quahog shells into wampum art and jewelry. The day will conclude with a beach cleanup at the Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve.

4. **“See Herring Run” across Cape Cod**

Leads: Abigail Archer (WHOISG) and Rob Vincent (MITSG)

The river herring are running! We’ll travel around Cape Cod to see alewife and blueback herring making their upstream migration at several locations (Orleans, Brewster, Dennis, Falmouth) and will learn about fish ladder and habitat restoration design, implementation, and monitoring, volunteer citizen science projects, and WHOI&MIT Sea Grant funded research projects. We’ll also meet the herring wardens and community partners who serve as stewards of these amazing coastal resources.

5. **Exploring tidal aquaculture at the Brewster Tidal Flats**

Leads: Rachel Hutchinson and Josh Reitsma (WHOISG)

Cape Cod Bay is known around the world for its extensive tidal flats, these tidal flats extend out miles, allowing for a unique intertidal aquaculture environment. We’ll explore tidal aquaculture across Cape Cod, from Eastham to Dennis to West Barnstable and Marston Mills with many stops along the way. Note: we’ll leave the hotel at 6 a.m. to catch the morning’s low tide.

DAY 3 BREAKOUT SESSION DESCRIPTIONS:

Breakout Session 1:

a) Resilience Planning and Resources

Lead: Sarah Schechter, Connecticut Sea Grant

Co-Leads/Active Players: Deborah Visco Abibou, Connecticut Sea Grant

Description: We will discuss our work on the Sustainable and Resilient Communities Team (SRC), which is made up of 6 members based around the Long Island Sound (LIS), working to provide support, guidance, and resources to the LIS communities. Members from **CT Sea Grant** would lead the session, discussing the efforts of the entire team, which includes colleagues from NY Sea Grant. We would plan to discuss and solicit feedback on our approach to this work which included an initial needs assessment that guided the development of regionally tailored resilience-focused trainings and workshops, resources, and funding assistance programs. Participants will have the opportunity to interact with our materials including our Guide to Resilience Planning for LIS Communities and LIS Resilience Resource Hub website.

b) Promoting accurate evidence-based information sharing related to coasts and oceans

Lead: Tracey Dalton, RI Sea Grant

Co-Leads/Active Players: Kim Ohnemus, RI Sea Grant; Saiontoni Sarkar, RI Sea Grant; Shannon Howley, URI Marine Affairs; Kayla Walsh, NY Sea Grant

Description: In an era of information overload, misunderstandings about ocean science can shape public perception and influence policy decisions. In this session, we will explore the origins and effects of misconceptions and misleading narratives related to ocean and coastal science. We will first present a brief overview of the latest research on this topic: How can you recognize misleading narratives? What are effective strategies for addressing these narratives, enhancing public understanding, and fostering trust in scientific research? Then participants will break into small groups and discuss 2-3 scenarios related to misunderstandings and misconceptions of coastal resilience, aquaculture, fisheries, and/or energy development and what actions they might take as Sea Grant staff to promote accurate evidence-based ocean and coastal science.

Breakout Session 2:

a) Participatory Science and Sea Grant

Lead: Jess Kuonen and Lillit Genovesi, New York Sea Grant

Co-Leads/Active players (NAME/Program):

Co-Leads: MIT (Lily Keyes keyes@mit.edu & Carolina Bastidas bastidas@mit.edu)

Description: This session will briefly identify different ways of engaging coastal communities in research and science (what Sea Grant calls "participatory science"), and describe a brief history of Sea Grant's approach to these initiatives. These approaches can vary, ranging from crowd-sourcing data, engaging volunteers to carry out data collection, to incorporating community feedback and concerns into the formation of research design. We will ask participants who have carried out participatory science initiatives to share out about their work's aims, outcomes, and lessons learned. Themes could include (but are not limited to): how community science enriches educational programming, validating data collected by volunteers, or co-identifying research questions and applications with communities.

b) Bolstering the Blue Economy Workforce (K-12, University, and professional)

Lead: Danny Badger, MIT Sea Grant

Description: The composition of the Blue Economy in each of our states is unique, and that drives much of our efforts to support a strong workforce. But for us all, fostering a workforce that stems from outside the university system can often present many challenges. This session will be a sharing of experiences as we explore the makeup of the blue economy in each state, the subsequent considerations we make when designing an approach to workforce development, and share the mechanisms, roadblocks, and solutions our various programs engage (or could engage) to facilitate Sea Grant's contributions to the Blue Economy Workforce. The challenges are deep, administratively, for extension and engagement, and financially. This session is an opportunity to learn tricks and techniques from our collective brains.

c) Improving Accessibility of Sea Grant Learning Opportunities from Digital Media to Field Experiences

Lead: Julia Peterson <Julia.Peterson@unh.edu>, Gracie Ballou <Gracie.Ballou@unh.edu>, Wells Costello <wellsley.costello@unh.edu> (NH Sea Grant)

Co-Leads/Active Players: Maria Beccari <maria.beccari@stonybrook.edu> (NYSG)

Description: About 1/4 of the US adult population has some sort of disability - visible or invisible, temporary or permanent. People affected include our program participants, volunteers, partners, colleagues, and ourselves. What can we do to make our Sea Grant field-based programs and digital documents more welcoming and effective for more people, including people with disabilities? This co-learning session will include stories from the field, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, PDF accessibility standards, and web compliance tips. Participants will be encouraged to share their experiences designing, delivering, and evaluating more accessible Sea Grant programs. By the end of the session, participants will have a deeper understanding of accessibility and concrete ideas for applying the concepts, principles, and practices to their work.